

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 210925  
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SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 210925

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY  
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S E C R E T STATE 210925

C O R R E C T E D COPY(PARAS 8 AND 9 OMITTED IN ORIG. TRANSM.)

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM 631 - AUGUST 18, 1978

LONDON FOR KINSOLVING  
PARIS FOR NICHOLAS MURPHY  
OTHER ADDRESSEES FOR CHIEFS OF MISSION

1. LEBANON. THE CEASEFIRE CONTINUED TO HOLD YESTERDAY, BUT CHRISTIAN SOURCES ARE VERY CONCERNED THAT THE SYRIANS MAY BE PLANNING TO ATTACK OVER THE WEEKEND OR EARLY NEXT WEEK. BASHIR GEMAYEL SAID PRIVATELY ON AUGUST 16 THAT HE PERSONALLY OPPOSED THE AUGUST 9 CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT FOR EAST BEIRUT, BUT WOULD NEVERTHELESS RESPECT IT. BASHIR CLAIMED THAT THE SYRIANS WOULD NOT LIVE UP TO THEIR PART OF THE BARGAIN. (THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DISAGREEMENT ON WHAT THE SYRIANS ACTUALLY AGREED TO DO.) HE REJECTED US COUNSELS OF RESTRAINT AND SAID THEY WOULD LEAD TO SYRIAN DOMINATION OR PARTITION. HE WAS, HOWEVER, RESPONSIVE TO POLITICAL DECISIONS OF THE PHALANGE POLITIBURO.

2. IN THE SOUTH, MEANWHILE, EMBASSY BEIRUT REPORTS THAT UNIFIL COMMANDER ERSKINE SAID AUGUST 16 THAT ONLY 150  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 210925

LEBANESE SOLDIERS REMAIN AT KAWKABA, THE REST HAVING WITHDRAWN NORTH. HE SAW NO POINT IN MOVING LEBANESE SOLDIERS EITHER TO TIBNIN OR SUFA AT THIS TIME. ERSKINE COMPLAINED THAT THE LEBANESE HAD MISLED UNIFIL, EVEN WHEN UNIFIL WAS TRYING TO STAND UP FOR THEIR INTERESTS. UNIFIL HAD OBTAINED RELIABLE INFORMATION THAT DESPITE LEBANESE DENIALS, THE ORIGINAL BATTALION WAS ACTUALLY SUPPOSED TO SERVE AS THE FRAMEWORK FOR A FULL BRIGADE, AND THE LEBANESE DID INTEND TO DROP OFF SOLDIERS IN MARJAYOUN. (SECRET)

3. ISRAEL. PRIME MINISTER BEGIN'S SPEECH TO SENIOR OFFICERS AT ISRAEL'S NATIONAL SECURITY COLLEGE ON AUGUST 16 TOUCHED ON A NUMBER OF THEMES RELATING TO THE CAMP DAVID MEETING. IN THIS PUBLIC ADDRESS, BEGIN STRESSED:

(A) THE IMPORTANCE, BUT NON-CRITICALITY, OF THE MEETING. (BEGIN OBSERVED THAT, "THE FATE OF OUR NATION DOES NOT DEPEND ON A MEETING -- NOT AT THE KING DAVID OR AT CAMP DAVID. . . . THE MEETING AT CAMP DAVID IS VERY IMPORTANT, BUT WE SHOULD NOT CALL IT FATEFUL. . . .");

(B) HIS REFUSAL TO CONTEMPLATE INTERIM AGREEMENTS, WHICH, HE SAID, WERE BASED ON UNILATERAL ISRAELI CONCESSIONS. ("NO MORE INTERIM AGREEMENTS....THESE ARE AGREEMENTS FOR A LIMITED PERIOD OF TIME WHOSE ESSENCE IS A UNILATERAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL.");

(C) ISRAEL'S WILLINGNESS TO PURSUE A "PERMANENT PARTIAL PEACE" AT CAMP DAVID, GIVEN THE DIFFICULTY OF ACHIEVING PEACE TREATIES AT THIS TIME; AND

(D) HIS CONTINUING REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS IN THE WEST BANK.

4. BEGIN'S ADDRESS, WHICH WAS DELIVERED FROM NOTES, TOOK  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 210925

A RATHER AGGRESSIVE TONE, WHICH, ACCORDING TO EMBASSY TEL AVIV, IS THE ONE BEGIN NORMALLY USES IN A MILITARY SETTING. HIS SPEECH DID NOT INDICT THE ARABS FOR INTRANSIGENCE, BUT IT EMPHASIZED ISRAEL'S REFUSAL TO ALTER ITS POSITION IN RESPONSE TO PRESSURE. HE ALSO SEEMED TO TAKE A RELAXED ATTITUDE TOWARD THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE MEETING MIGHT PRODUCE LITTLE MOVEMENT.

5. THE TWO BASIC THEMES OF BEGIN'S PRESENTATION WERE: A REFUSAL TO CONSIDER TERRITORIAL PARTITION OF THE WEST BANK; AND A DESIRE TO MOVE TOWARD A SEPARATE AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT AND TO AVOID A FINAL BREAKDOWN OF NEGOTIATIONS. BEGIN SET FORTH HIS CONCEPT OF A "PERMANENT PARTIAL PEACE," NOTING THAT "THIS IS WHAT WE WILL BE TAKING TO CAMP DAVID WITH US." HE SAID THAT THIS MEANT PEACEFUL RELATIONS -- AN END TO BLOODSHED, OPEN BORDERS, ECONOMIC TIES, AND FREE MOVEMENT -- WITHOUT FORMAL PEACE TREATIES. BEGIN CITED GERMANY -- AS HE HAS IN THE PAST -- AS AN EXAMPLE OF A NATION WITH WHICH OTHER STATES HAVE IMPLEMENTED "PEACEFUL RELATIONS" WITHOUT EVER SIGNING PEACE TREATIES. BEGIN EMPHASIZED THE ELEMENT OF MUTUALITY IN THE CONTEXT OF "PERMANENT PARTIAL PEACE," THUS MAKING CLEAR THAT ISRAEL WOULD CONSIDER THE RETURN OF TERRITORY ONLY IN EXCHANGE FOR ELEMENTS OF NORMALIZATION WHICH WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED PERMANENTLY.

6. BEGIN'S DENUNCIATION OF INTERIM AGREEMENTS IS DICTATED BY A POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED TO DIFFERENTIATE HIMSELF AND HIS NEGOTIATING PROGRAM FROM THE LABOR ALIGNMENT. BEGIN WAS A BITTER OPPONENT OF THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT WITH SYRIA AND SINAI I AND II AS WELL. HIS STRONG OPPOSITION TO THESE AGREEMENTS DERIVED PRINCIPALLY FROM HIS PERCEPTION THAT THEY WERE GIVEAWAYS,  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 210925

EXTORTED UNDER US PRESSURE AND CONCLUDED BY WEAK-KNEED GOVERNMENTS. INDEED, THE VIRULENCE OF BEGIN'S FEELING TOWARD ALIGNMENT CRITICS WHO ARE CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT THE PRINCIPLE OF TERRITORIAL PARTITION IN THE WEST BANK WAS DEMONSTRATED WHEN BEGIN REFERRED TO THEM AS "APPEASERS."

7. THE EMPHASIS BEGIN PLACED ON A "PERMANENT PARTIAL PEACE" REFLECTS A GROWING SENSE WITHIN ISRAEL THAT A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE SETTLEMENT WILL NOT BE ATTAINABLE. MANY IN THE ALIGNMENT AGREE WITH THIS PROGNOSIS. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEGIN AND LABOR IS OVER THE RETURN ISRAEL SHOULD GET FOR TERRITORIAL RETROCESSIONS, AS WELL AS THE EXTENT OF THESE RETROCESSIONS AND THE UTILITY OF ADOPTING THE POSITION OF TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE ON THE WEST BANK.

8. VIRTUALLY NO ONE IN ISRAEL IS PREPARED TO MEET SADAT'S PUBLICLY STATED PRICE FOR PEACE. WHILE LABOR PRESENTS A MORE FORTHCOMING OUTWARD STANCE THAN BEGIN, AND IS IN FACT WILLING TO RETURN SOME WEST BANK TERRITORY, LABORITES PERCEIVE THAT THE GAP BETWEEN THEIR MOST FORTHCOMING PUBLIC POSITION AND THAT DEMANDED BY SADAT ON THE WEST BANK ISSUE IS UNBRIDGEABLE. MOREOVER, LABOR IS DEEPLY DIVIDED ON THE ISSUE OF CONCESSIONS BUT HAS BEEN ABLE TO PAPER OVER THESE DIFFERENCES IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE PARTY'S OPPOSITION STATUS.

9. BEGIN'S SPEECH HAS DRAWN SHARP CRITICISM FROM THE HAWKISH MAARIV, WHICH DERIDED HIS PROPOSAL THAT EGYPT NORMALIZE RELATIONS IN EXCHANGE FOR PART OF THE TERRITORIES LOST IN THE 1967 WAR. MAARIV ALSO ASSERTED THAT NOT A SINGLE STATESMAN ANY LONGER HOLDS THE VIEW THAT BEGIN'S AUTONOMY PLAN IS "GOOD AND FAIR." (CONFIDENTIAL) VANCE

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